750
Ruse

Exploring Hal-lowed History

Hal Jordan's life, the subject of DC history, has been chronicled in the pages of the original ***Green Lantern*** series. His death, the focus of ***Final Night***, has been re-explored peripherally in the pages of Kevin Smith's ***Green Arrow***. His afterlife is presented each month in the pages of ***The Spectre***. So there's nothing else left to say about the late, great Green Lantern, is there?

Joe Kelly doesn't *quite* agree with that.

Kelly, writer of the hardcover graphic novel ***Green Lantern: Legacy—The Last Will and Testament of Hal Jordan***, is convinced that there are other stories of Hal to be told, other gaps to be filled in. While Hal's life and death have been explored in earlier books, the *effects* of that life and death on those who were close to Hal have gone largely overlooked. That's why Kelly is taking us back to the time just after Hal Jordan's self-sacrificing demise; there are other stories tied to that moment that are waiting to be told—stories that involve both Hal and his friends.

Green Lantern: Legacy focuses on one of Hal's oldest and most trusted friends, Tom Kalmaku, his mechanic and confidante. "In a nutshell, Tom's life has steadily gone down the crapper since Hal's death," Kelly explained. "He's lost everything—his family, his pride, his life, because of his anger at Hal and his fall. On the verge of suicide, he's approached by a mysterious 'executor' who has something for him... the legacy of Hal Jordan... his son. This spins Tom off on a quest across the globe—and finally into the stars—to 'fix' what Hal left broken... and hopefully, to fix himself in the process."

Why focus the story on Tom Kalmaku, an almost forgotten supporting character from Hal's past? "I chose Tom for this project for a few reasons—in part because he *was* forgotten in recent years, while also representing the joy of those Silver Age Stories. He also struck me as the ultimate Hal 'fan,' someone who truly *loved* Hal and the Green Lantern, and who was shattered—as many fans were—to see him fall. He was just *perfect* for this story."

Tom's discovery of a purported son of Hal Jordan isn't a joyous event, though—because there's someone who wants to elminate all descendants of Hal Jordan, along with any and all who assist or defend those descendants. Who is this enemy, and why is his hate for Hal Jordan so strong that it extends beyond Hal's death? That's what Tom and the young boy must find out...

Legacy is more than a story of Tom Kalmaku and Hal's son; it also features flashback scenes of Hal Jordan in action as Green Lantern. So what is it about Hal Jordan—as well as his old ally, Barry Allen, who gave his life in ***Crisis on Infinite Earths***—that keeps drawing creators and fans back to their exploits even though there are contemporary heroes carrying on their legacies? "Barry's death was such a shock, and it was so horrible —after all, very few deaths beat running yourself into a skeleton and then non-existence!—that it lingers... not to mention that he died a hero," Kelly explained. "Hal is something very different, though. His fall from grace was very terrible and painful, and caused this major rift between fans and DCU characters alike. His 'retribution' during ***Final Night*** didn't really settle the score, so it's like an open wound for a lot of folks. So people focus on Barry for inspiration, and on Hal as a tale of warning—both important for our characters, but very different."

Green Lantern: Legacy unites Kelly with artists *Brent Anderson* and *Bill Sienkiewicz*, a pair of top-notch illustrators not normally associated with Green Lantern. Anderson is a natural choice for this powerful drama, though; as the artist of ***Kurt Busiek's Astro City***, he has demonstrated his skill at portraying human drama as well as superhero action. And Sienkiewicz, an artist's artist whose contributions to the field are far too rare, adds an edge to the graphic novel's visuals. The result is a Green Lantern story that is not only moving to read, but captivating to look at as well.

Don't think of ***Legacy*** as a throwaway flashback tale, either. "I know that the ramifications of this book will be felt inthe ***Green Lantern*** series," Kelly said, "and it could reach ***Spectre***, too."

Green Lantern: Legacy—The Last Will and Testament of Hal Jordan, a 112-page hardcover graphic novel priced at $24.95, is scheduled for November 28th release.

by Cliff Biggers

CrossGen's Latest Ruse is Mysterious

CrossGen has grand fantasy series, magical series, science fiction series, adventure series... so, other than superheroes, it's a mystery to most fans what's missing from the CrossGen lineup.

And that's where ***Ruse***, the new series by *Mark Waid*, *Butch Guice*, *Mike Perkins*, and *Laura DePuy*, comes into play!

"***Ruse***, like many of CrossGen's titles, is a foray into a largely comics-absent genre of fiction these days: the detective story," writer *Mark Waid* explained. "***Ruse***, set on a world reminiscent of—but subtly different from—Victorian England, chronicles the adventures of the era's greatest and most brilliant criminal analyst (a man with the mind of a genius and the emotion of a desk calendar) and his fiery aide-de-camp (whose job it is never to let her boss lose sight of the human element when it comes to the art of investigation). They're up against a strange criminal mastermind from parts unknown who's gradually spinning a web of darkness and chaos over the land.

"Over the years, our detective has found true and worthy challenges harder and harder to come by...until a new criminal mastermind arises from parts unknown, spreading tendrils of darkness and chaos.The villain's birthplace... is Negation space. Why is a Negation agent after the detective? What possible threat could a single mortal man pose to an entire dimension of alien warmongers? If the detective—and his worldwide network of operatives—don't find out soon, the balance of the entire CrossGen Universe will be forever altered. I promise."

Ruse is not only CrossGen's first mystery, it's also the first CrossGen book pencilled by *Butch Guice*, most recently known for his outstanding work on DC's ***Birds of Prey***. Was ***Ruse*** created with Guice in mind? "Actually, the basic setting sprang from a conversation between *Mark Alessi* and *Gina Villa*, and all the writers fleshed it out during one of our weekly lunch meetings. Once we had a series concept, Butch and I began exchanging the notes, faxes, and ideas that transformed ***Ruse*** from an idea to a series. Butch is doing a magnificent job modeling this world after Victorian England—but we've been discussing the little touches that make it slightly fantastic without being 'magical.' I've always wanted to work with Butch on something; I think he's an extremely talented artist and a great storyteller."

The series has proven to be a real test of Guice's skills: not only does take advantage of his proven skill at portraying human emotion and realistic non-superheroic figures, it also demands that he become an expert in Victoriana in order to give the world of Arcadia a sense of verisimilitude. " I'm starting on my second bookshelf of reference here at CrossGen in addition to three file folders of downloaded reference," Guice said. "This is the most labor-intensive book I've ever attempted in terms of research. I can only hope all our hard work and devotion will shine each issue... It's a departure from superhero comics, but that's what makes it so exciting."

Inker *Mike Perkins* is having a great time finishing Guice's pencils, although he's had to make a few adjustments due to Guice's obsession with accuracy. "Actually, Butch is recovering from his intensive referencing for the role—he *lives* the part.," Perkins joked. "Now if only I could get him to stop wearing those victorian corsets..."

"You guys really should know better than to believe anything Mike 'Give me those hot Victorian booties to ink' Perkins has to say about me and... uh, excuse me a second... I think the lacing is a little tight around the ribs. I'll be back to finish this discussion later..." Guice responded.

The final member of the ***Ruse*** creative team is award-winning colorist *Laura DePuy*, who's enjoying the subtle demands of the series. "***Ruse*** is definitely giving me something new to work with," DePuy said. "For one, I'm not coloring spandex. You know how long it's been since I colored a full-length satin dress? I don't think I ever have! I'm so used to modeling the musculature under spandex, that 'real clothes' with all their folds and wrinkles are a real challenge... But I'm having a fantastic time going through books and catalogues of vintage clothing. I feel like I've gone back to school. It's wonderful!"

DePuy added that "Butch's work screams for a naturalistic touch, so I'm making an effort to expand my knowledge of the facial structure and how light hits it. I think you'll really like the first scene in ***Ruse #1***; plenty of faces to render there!

The series is set in the world of Arcadia, which is reminiscent of Victorian-era Earth... with a few changes. For one thing, the economy is based on coal and oil rather than precious metals; Arcadia's scarcity of fossil fuels has led to a dependence on natural gas, wind, and solar power. Furthermore, the absence of fossil fuels has circumvented a significant industrial revolution on this world. And while Arcadia has its nobility, the real elite of this world are its scientists and engineers, not its lords and its barons.

The capital city of this world is Parthington, the home of Simon Archard, an aloof master detective whose deductive abilities are unparalleled. Archard, along with his aide and confidante Emma Bishop, keeps Parthington safe and secure. But Archard has secrets that the citizens of Parthington don't suspect... and Emma has secrets of her own that even Archard about which even Archard is clueless.

Every master detective needs a Moriarty to test his skills, and Miranda Cross fills that role. Baroness of the distant land Kharibast and a recent arrival to Parthington, the elegant Miranda is in reality the commander of a worldwide criminal network dedicated to the accumulation of wealth and power and an agent of the Negation (you knew there'd be a tie-in to the CrossGen Cosmos, didn't you?). She is aware that Archard hides a secret of great significance to her and her people, and she is determined to find out what it is.

Publisher *Mark Alessi* is quite impressed by what he's seen of ***Ruse***—and he's confident that fans are going to be amazed by the blend of mystery, fantasy, and alternate-reality that is at the core of the series. "***Ruse*** is the real deal, I have just finished reading it, and it is not only the finest book we have ever produced, it will most certainly become a classic," Alessi said. "Every legitimate player in this business has their Spider-Man or Batman—and ***Ruse*** will be, we believe, that player for us!... You know, for just one brief moment while reading ***Ruse***, I was back in the early sixties picking up ***Spider-Man #1*** off the stands—except this time I knew what I had in my hands!"

Explore the mysteries of Arcadia for yourself this week with ***Ruse #1***, a $2.95 comic that should be on the comic shop racks even as you're reading this!

by Cliff Biggers

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

CSNsider

David Wohl, Ladies' Man

David Wohl certainly knows women! We're not talking about his personal life, mind you—Wohl's a happily married man with a new baby—but his professional life. Don't get the wrong idea there, either—Wohl, one of Top Cow's most successful and popular creators and a co-creator of ***Witchblade***, is turning his attention to the ladies in the pages of ***Witchblade/Lady Death***, a crossover comic coming up from Top Cow.

Okay, we know what you're thinking—another one of those vanilla crossovers with very little personality and no connection to the ongoing series, right? Wrong! "At first I was toying with the idea of doing a story with 'classic' Lady Death," Wohl said, "but then I picked up ***Lady Death Alive*** and saw that they located her in New York, so I decided it would be cool to have a story that took place within the continuity of *both* books.

"The premise here is that Sara Pezzini and her partner Jake McCarthy are looking into what looks like ritual murders, and the investigation leads Sara into an encounter with a man named Virgil—who is the ghostly ex-NYPD detective—and ultimately to Lady Death, herself. As the story progresses, we realize that these murders are somehow connected to the chaos magic that created Lady Death, and all hell breaks loose!!!... Sorry. I *love* saying that. I'm a dork!"

A ***Witchblade/Lady Death*** crossover has been in the talking stages for quite a while, as it turns out. "Chaos! is one of those companies that we've seen for years on the convention circuit and we get along really well with them. We've talked to *Brian Pulido* a few times about it, saying it was something we should really do—but we never really did it! But finally, very early this year, *Matt Hawkins* and Brian spoke and decided it was finally time to *really* do it. And I gotta say, I'm glad we did! And I'm also glad Matt asked me to be the writer of this one!"

Part of the fun for Wohl was merging the darkly suspenseful Top Cow approach with the splatterpunk-horror style of Chaos! "Actually it was fun to combine the two. I think it was fun for *Francis Manapul*, the artist, too! It's a bit more grisly than what I'm used to. Hmm, I wonder how morbid I make Francis and myself sound if I'm talking about how how much fun we had doing stuff more gory!... Oh well, I'm not ashamed to say it–I *enjoyed* it!"

Witchblade/Lady Death is the second crossover involving the two characters, following Chaos! Comics' ***Lady Death/Medieval Witchblade***. So how did the two companies handle their crossover books? "Basically we each had control over our own books, and the other company had approval over every facet," Wohl said. "They were really good about sending us their story with plenty of time to go over it. I wasn't quite so good, and always sent them stuff at the last minute and needed a quick turnaround—in typical Top Cow fashion... uh, no offense to my company! But I have to say that Brian and *Mike Francis* were *great* at accommodating us with quick turnaround on the stuff. They were also really good at getting back to me on Lady Death mythology and continuity questions—which I had a lot of!"

While ***Witchblade/Lady Death*** does link to the continuity of both books, Wohl is aware that he can't do too much to shake up the continuity of either series, "but I think that Witchblade and Lady Death are two properties that are very fertile for new stories—and with a little foresight, you could avoid any potential continuity pitfalls. For *Brian Augustyn*, he solved the problem by going into the past, where there are *loads* of untold ***Witchblade*** stories to choose from, with loads of different women who could potentially be wielders.

"For me, as soon as I thought of the kind of story I wanted to do, I talked to Brian about how it could fit into Lady Death continuity. He told me it didn't work where I wanted it, but I could fit it in between ***Lady Death Alive*** and ***Lady Death: Last Rites***. That worked fine with me. After that, I was able to do whatever I wanted. I guess he'd have a problem if I wanted to kill her or get her married and settled down, but I've worked on enough crossovers to know where to draw the line!"

Lady Death/Witchblade isn't Wohl's only high-profile series for Top Cow. His other series teams him with one of Image's most popular artists and one of Image's founding members. "*Marc Silvestri* and I are currently working on ***Inferno***! He's drawing it and it looks phenomenal. I think people will be quite impressed in November when this book comes out. I know I am—and I've been working with him for over eight years.

"I'm also coming back to ***Witchblade*** as of issue #54. I'm really excited about that. I'll be working with *Francis Manapul*, who worked on ***Witchblade/Lady Death*** as well as the second ***Fear Effect*** book with me. After seeing his work on those, I pleaded with Marc and Matt to let me ask him to be the penciller on ***Witchblade*** after *Brian Ching* left, and I think they agreed just to shut me up. I think our first issue will come out in March and I hope everybody gives it a chance."

Witchblade/Lady Death, a $4.95 comic, should be on the comic shop shelves at about the same time as this issue of *CSN*.

DC's Voice of Authority

The Authority Volume 2, which was originally scheduled to debut in early 2002, has been put on indefinite hold "in the wake of the tragic events of September 11th," DC has announced.

The Authority #s 27, 28, and ***29***, the final installments of the *Mark Millar* story that began early this year, have been added to DC's schedule once again, although each book will appear approximately six weeks later than originally announced, to allow for "some editorial adjustments that had already been in discussion in recent weeks and which were crystallized by the events of September 11th." The new schedule is

- ***The Authority #27*** - December 5th
- ***The Authority #28*** - January 4th
- ***The Authority #29*** - February 6th

Brian Azzarello and *Steve Dillon*, originally announced as the creators of ***The Authority Volume 2***, are no longer involved with the series. "After the very real events of 9/11 and what unfortunately is yet to come, there was no way the story I had planned for ***The Authority*** could be told—*period*," Azzarello said. "This has more to do with philosophical and religious belief systems that would have been touched upon rather than the widescreen destruction and intimately graphic violence that make ***The Authority*** such a unique book. Instead of watering down and drastically changing what I had planned, I decided to withdraw from the book. End of story—but not my relationship with WildStorm."

And, as ***CSNsider*** reported initially two weeks ago, The Authority Widescreen has been removed from DC's publishing schedule due to concerns with the content of the *Bryan Hitch* story "The Man with the Quantum Brain." The remainder of the issue might see publication later on in another ***Authority*** special, but Hitch will not be contributing another story due to his move to Marvel, where he'll be illustrating ***The Ultimates***.

"Despite all the turmoil we're going through to find the right path for ***The Authority***, I'm confident that there *will* be new ***Authority*** projects in the future," says *Jim Lee*, WildStorm's Creative Director.

Talk About Your Graphic Album!...

Remember albums? If you do, you're probably old enough to predate the CD revolution. Those 12" vinyl discs, complete with their oversized covers, were much more artistically appealing than today's tiny CD covers with their minuscule illustrations.

Well, if bigger was better for album covers, then why not for comics as well? ***The Comics Journal Winter 2002 Special***, a hefty 120-page volume, is not only large in terms of its page-count, but also in terms of its dimensions: the special issue is an impressive 12" x 12" volume—the same measurements as those venerable album covers!

"Beginning with this issue, twice a year, ***Comics Journal*** will publish in a special 'coffee table' format with longer and more extensive critical and historical essays and career overviews of individual cartoonists, and interviews with critically acclaimed contemporary cartoonists," Fantagraphics' *Eric Reynolds* said. "This edition cover features *Joe Sacco*, whose recent book of reportage during the Bosnia civil war, ***Safe Area Gorazde***, has been both a commercial and critical success. Sacco contributes a new cover, a new strip, and is the subject of a long interview.

"Taking full advantage of the coffee-table size and color capacity, text-and-visual features include an appreciation by *Jim Woodring* on the great turn-of-the-century cartoonist *T.S. Sullivant*, with many examples of Sulivant's virtuoso pen and ink work; an essay by *Don Phelps* on ***Smokey Stover***, with a generous portion of full color Smokey Stover strips; an appreciation of the obscure newspaper cartoonist *W.E. Hill* by *Bill Grifith* with examples of Hill's full-page Sunday strips; and an excerpt from the second chapter of ***B. Krigstein, a*** critical biography of Bernard Krigstein forthcoming from Fantagraphics.

"The special edition also features new strips done especially for the magazine by today,s best cartoonists, including *Dave Cooper, Bill Griffith, Charles Burns, Gary Panter, R. Crumb, Ivan Brunetti, Jaime Hernandez, Justin Green, Mary Fleener, Gilbert Hernandez, Phoebe Gloeckner, Carol Tyler, Richard Sala, Jordan Crane, Dylan Horrocks, Roger Langridge,* and *Chris Ware*. Each strip is on the theme of cartooning itself, most are in *full color*, and I think people will be surprised to find this the best and most cohesive comics anthology in recent memory. Not bad for a magazine not even *considered* a comics anthology!"

The Comics Journal Winter 2002 Special, a $14.95 book, is slated for December 2002 release.

A month later, Fantagraphics follows this hefty tome with ***B. Krigstein***, *Greg Sadowski*'s book that is previewed in the pages of the ***Winter 2002 Special***. Reynolds describes this volume as "a gigantic retrospective/biography/critical assessment of one of the most important cartoonists in the history of comics, who went on to become a renowned fine arts teacher in New York. The author had full access to Bernard Krigstein,s archives and files and has written a compelling biography of the artist from his childhood in New York to his days as a comics artist from the late ,40s to the early ,60s, and through his post-comics career as a fine artist, commercial illustrator, and teacher... This first of two volumes traces Krigstein's groundbreaking comic-book work at Hillman, Atlas, DC, and EC, as well as his parallel development as an illustrator and painter."

B. Krigstein, a 240-page hardcover, is scheduled for January release.

Udon: Wanna Know?

A couple of weeks ago, *CSN* told you about the upcoming ***X-Men: Evolution*** comic by *Devin Grayson* and *Udon* . Okay, odds are you've heard of Grayson (after all, she's done outstanding work for both Marvel and DC)... but who is *Udon*?

"*Udon* is an umbrella name for a group of artists who have a mutual goal: aiming to deliver high quality stories and art in a timely fashion," *Erik Ko* of Udon told ***CSNsider***. "The Udon membership now consists of fifteen members: *Long Vo, Charles Park, Saka* and *Locke* of Studio XD, *Arnold Tsang, Alvin Lee, Omar Dogan, Jo & Christina Chen, Shane Law, Angelo Tsang* (a.k.a. Frozen Light), *Alan Tam, Ken Siu-chong, Jeff Woo,*

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and me." That's quite an impressive group of creators—you might recognize their names in conjunction with such high-profile projects as ***Darkminds, Last Shot,*** and ***Warlands.***

So how'd this talented team end up working together under the Udon Studios name? "We came together as a group because we believe that we can complement and support each other better rather than splitting off as individuals," Ko said. "We all have our individual skills and by coming together, we can provide the audience the best package. By working together as a collective group, we can tackle larger projects than we could individually," Ko said. "We feel that rather than spreading out looking for work individually, by grouping together, we can offer better packages for the publishers—and more importantly, the readers.

"As artists, we feed off each other's talents and we will constantly improve to stay on top of things. Also, by placing different artist together on projects, there is an virtually always an exciting chemistry that makes each project a fresh one in terms of style and creativity."

Ko not only acts as the group's spokesman, he's also the man who oversees Udon's day-to-day operations. ""My role is to take care of all the stuff for the crew, so that all they need to do is concentrate on what they do best and most enjoy – the art. I take care of all the communication with publishers so the artists can concentrate on what they do best.

"Current projects that we are involved includes:

- ***X-Men Evolution*** - art by Long Vo, Charles Park, & Saka;
- ***Last Shot*** - written by *Locke*, art by *Long Vo, Charles Park, & Saka* ;
- ***Fantastic Four #50*** - an eight-page back up story written by *Ken Siu-chong*, with art by *Alvin Lee, Omar Dogan,* and *Angelo Tsang;*
- ***Captain Marvel # 26*** - cover art by *Alvin Lee* and *Arnold Tsang;*
- ***Spider-Girl #39*** - Cover art by *Arnold Tsang;*
- ***Marvel Millennium Visions*** - X-Men: Evolution by *Arnold Tsang*, Psylocke by *Jo Chen,* and SHIELD by *Alvin Lee* and *Omar Dogan;*
- ***Vampi*** - monthly backgrounds and inks by *Alan Tam;*

plus some upcoming projects that we will be announcing shortly."

One of those projects is exceptionally well suited for Udon's talents and interests: ***Avengers Assemble,*** a manga-influenced book appearing that will reinterpret the Avengers as a giant-robot-style manga. "Marvel was looking for ideas for a cool title for the Mangaverse event. I passed the task on to *Ken Siu-chong*. He decided to take the catch-phrase 'Avengers Assemble!' *literally!*"

Avengers Assemble!, a part of the Marvel Mangaverse event, is scheduled for January release—and that's the first high-profile project of what promises to be a busy year for Udon!

Organizing Chaos! With a Second Imprint

When Chaos! Comics premiered with ***Evil Ernie*** and ***Lady Death*** back in the early 90s, the concepts may have seemed splatter-punk... and at the time, they were radical comics. But times have changed, and what was once radical seems almost routine... which is why Chaos! is adding a new imprint, Black Label Graphics, to its line.

"I have a certain storytelling style that my long time fans crave, and Black Label Graphics is where those stories will be unleashed," publisher *Brian Pulido* said. "Black Label Graphics is the home for my dark creativity. It's the place my fans will get pure, dark, undiluted Pulido stories."

Black Label will debut with ***The Undead,*** a horror series slated for early 2002 release. Black Label Graphics titles will also feature the Chaos! imprint, identifying these books as harder-edged titles in the Chaos! tradition. Other books in the works include ***The Dwelling*** and two more ***Evil Ernie*** titles.

The Undead, the first Black Label title, is written by Pulido, publisher and founder of Chaos! "***The Undead*** is a hard-core comic, with a pure terrifying tale that isn't for the squeamish," marketing director *Chad Soliman* said. "The art—detailed and horrific—isn't for the faint at heart! Chaos! is giving the fans what they've demanded, and *Brian Pulido*'s ***The Undead #1*** will satisfy that craving. ***The Undead*** features Homicide (a.k.a. Dead King) making his triumphant return!"

The series, illustrated by *Brian Denham,* is set ten years after the Earth has been overrun by zombies, transforming our world into a post-apocalyptic cadaverous wasteland. And with this new world disorder comes a new culture, with its own bizarre rituals and horrifying customs. The only hope for the ever-dwindling human race is The Undead, an anti-hero who has hoped to leave his life of violence behind... but if a group of human captives are to avoid being sold to a zombie-run meat processor, the Undead will have to return to his old ways.

The Undead #1, which features over forty pages of story and art in black and white, is scheduled for January release. The book is available in a standard edition, a premium edition with a Western-themed cover by *David Michael Beck*, and a super-premium edition with a *Brad Parker* cover that Soliman describes as "so gruesome, it's something you have to see to believe!"

A Blackmark on Fantagraphics' Schedule

Gil Kane was far more than a comics artist. During his half-century-plus career, Kane wrote a wide variety of comics stories—and he presented those stories in a variety of formats that went beyond the constraints of the standard comic book. One of his first experiments, ***His Name Is... Savage,*** presented a really *big* story in one of the first mature-readers black-and-white magazines; another of his experiments, a heroic fantasy volume, went smaller rather than larger, appearing as an original paperback comic in the late 1960s. Unfortunately, neither experiment was wholly successful...

In fact, the sales response to the first volume of ***Blackmark,*** Kane's paperback-original sword and sorcery saga, was so lukewarm that the completed second volume was never published—but that long-lost gem is about to see print, thanks to the folks at Fantagraphics, who

have a long history with Kane (in fact, it was *Gary Groth,* publisher of Fantagraphics, who conducted some of the most insightful and entertaining Kane interviews ever to see print).

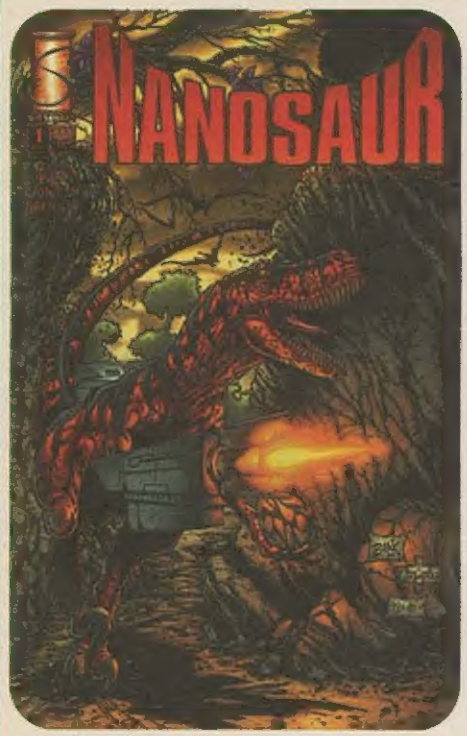
"***Blackmark*** was [Kane's] attempt to go 'independent' and create a series which he would own and whose creative direction he could control," *Eric Reynolds* said. "The first volume of this sword & sorcery/heroic fantasy narrative, designed and published in the paperback format, has been out of print for over twenty-five years, and the completed second volume was never published. Fantagraphics Books is proud to collect both volumes in a single trade book format, larger than the original paperback size to better showcase Kane's elegant art."

Blackmark, a 180-page trade paperback priced at $16.95, is scheduled for January release.

Tyrannosaurus Mac

If you bought an iMac in the past few years, you're probably familiar with ***Nanosaur,*** the dinosaur-focused fantasy videogame prepackaged on iMacs for the past few years. Thanks to the folks at Samson Comics, the Mac-less unfortunate will soon be able to enjoy ***Nanosaur*** along with everyone else—not as a videogame, but as a comic book!

Nanosaur is produced by *Todd Broeker, Rich Bonk,* and *Kevin Conrad*—creators already known to many fans for their work on ***The Tenth, F5, Kiss: The Psycho Circus, Spawn: The Dark Ages,*** and ***Curse of the Spawn.***



Bonk, a dinosaur fan, is especially eager to bring this dino-adventure to comics. "I'd been enthralled with [dinosaurs] since I was a tot, and that's practically all I drew while growing up. I still do love them, eagerly absorbing every new tidbit of dino info that I come across in newspapers and ***National Geographic*** (after perusing the naked native women pictures)," Bonk said.

Of course, *those* dinosaurs didn't carry guns...

It took Bonk a while to get past the "armed dinos" concept—but writer Todd Broeker put together a story that made it work! Originally, Bonk was to have inked the book—but when he saw the pencil work of the original artist for the series, he convinced publisher *Peter Caravette* that he could do better.

Writer/colorist *Todd Broeker* got involved with the project at the suggestion of inker *Kevin Conrad*, who introduced Broeker to Caravette . "Ever since I bought *James Gurney's* ***Dinotopia***, I've been wanting to get involved with a project as visually stunning as his brilliant illustrations are," Broeker said. "I never imagined it would be in comic form with such a talented group of people. Like a lot of guys, I have been enthralled with dinosaurs since I was a kid... So, I can't thank Kevin enough for getting me involved with this ***Nanosaur*** project. It's going to be a very exciting book."

Find out just how exciting it is in early November when ***Nanosaur #1*** claws its way into comic shops.

Tierney's Star Struck

For the better part of two decades, *Michael Tierney* has been driven by a desire to create comics—but, as Tierney put it, "my timing was bad." What he lacked in timing, though, he more than made up for in persistence—and earlier this year, his concept, ***Wild Stars***, saw print. Now that he has a book on the comic shop racks, Tierney is now working on beefing up his creative team and creating a buzz for the science fiction series.

"I started out as a printer straight out of high school, and by twenty-two was managing the Fast Print division of International Graphics," Tierney told ***CSNsider***. "The years in management really taught me the rest of the printing process. In 1977, I self-published ***The Multiversal Scribe Magazine***, a collection of stories of several different genres with my artwork."

Then Tierney got sidetracked by the comics biz—not creating comics, but selling them! "In 1982, I went into business for myself with my first comics store... I tried to start ***Wild Stars*** twice in the Eighties, but my timing was bad, hitting on either side of the black and white boom/bust. I had planned to start again in the early nineties, but other events beyond my control delayed me until now. But I *never* stopped working on the project, which led to a ***Wild Stars*** novel and the comic.

"The first twelve issues adapt my novel ***Under the Wild Stars***, an extension of another novel that I initially wrote in the mid-Seventies. This series is as cross-genre as, say, ***Grimjack***. One issue might be a ghost story, the next science-fiction, and the next crime. But they all connect to a larger back story.

What is the concept of ***Wild Stars?*** "The Wild Stars are the stars we see when we look up into the night sky. They are our area of space, and there is a lot more life and things going on in our own backyard than anyone imagines. I try to build on this premise a little more with each issue, grounding the stories in the world around us that the readers are familiar with. One of the key building blocks is the question of why the alien Brothan consider Earth dangerous. Issue five will explain that those other humanoids the Brothan are warring against are descendants an earlier migration from Earth. We—you, me, the reader—represent the second stellar migration."

Wild Stars' first two issues were illustrated by *David Brewer*—but when he had to leave the comic due to other commitments in the commercial art field, Tierney brought in artist *Dave Simon*. How'd he find the talented illustrator? "[Cover artist] *Frank Brunner* was the key here. I was talking to other artists, and trying to contact what *Peter David* calls 'Fantoms' (old school artists who are ignored by their former employers), when Frank mentioned that an artist he had known for years was looking for work. Right from the start, Dave nailed the scripts perfectly!..

"One reason Dave's pencils look so great is his experience. Like Frank, Dave has done it all—from comics to animation. When he sent me his resumé, it was three pages long! His most recent work was as an animator for ***Courage the Cowardly Dog***. The comics work I reviewed when first considering him were frontispieces and pin-ups done for the ***Savage Sword of Conan*** back in the Eighties."

Tierney is quite enthusiastic in his praise for cover artist *Frank Brunner's* work for the series—and for his support of ***Wild Stars***. Brunner got involved when Tierney "received a reply to a letter I had sent to *Frank Brunner* about an ad he had run where he was accepting commissions. We started a dialog, and built from there. I can't put enough emphasis on how great Frank has been to work with. I have such a specific vision in mind for this series, and Frank depicts it perfectly. He was used to working from single paragraph descriptions for covers, and my concept sketches are always accompanied with pages of details and references—on the second issue, I included a botanical chart for the leaves of the trees. But Frank never complains, and somehow manages to incorporate every detail into the final product. On the second cover, he spent an entire day just inking the detail on the tree!"

While working on upcoming issues of ***Wild Stars***, Tierney is also looking ahead to his next project—a spinoff of his current series. " *Armando Gil* is working now on the pencils for a ***Wild Stars*** future chronicle called ***Prairie Bay***. It's a one-shot set on Mars, and if successful, leads into another series of stories. Being a compulsive writer, I had joked with Dave that I could publish a monthly comic for years without ever having to think of a new story—which I keep doing anyway. Dave mentioned this to Armando, who then contacted me. It's really nice when talented people express an interest in drawing your ideas! And it's even more fun seeing the final product!"

Wild Stars #3, a $2.95 comic, is scheduled for January 2002 release.

Ins & Outs

In: *Maureen McTigue*, formerly an editor at DC and WizardWorld.com, is taking over as editor of Harris Comics, where she replaces the departing *David Bogart*. "When this opportunity came up, the decision to join was easy," McTigue said. "There's something intriguing about ***Vampirella***, and I have some experience with dark-haired super-powered comics women who wear red, so it's all good."

"Maureen is perfect for the job," Harris Comics executive Publisher *Jonathan Rheingold* added. "Her experience, industry contacts, and her incredible taste will ensure that our books keep getting better."

Out & In: So where's *David Bogart* going? Up the road to Marvel, that's where! Bogart has taken on the job of Managing Editor at Marvel, working Editor In Chief *Joe Quesada* and Director of Publishing Operations *Bob Greenberger* on a variety of efforts, from maintaining Marvel's publishing schedule to developing new series and formats. In addition, David will edit ***X-Men Unlimited***, which will now be published bi-monthly.

"What attracted me to Marvel? In one word: talent," Bogart stated. "Not just the talent on the books, but behind-the-scenes as well. In just a little over a year, Marvel's management and editorial staff have turned the company around. I look forward to becoming a member of the team."

"During my freelance days I had the pleasure of working with Bogie!" added Quesada. "He's a fine editor and I'm thrilled to have someone with his talents and organizational skills making Marvel his home!"

In: ***G.I. Joe*** and ***Transformers***, mainstays at Marvel in the 1980s, are making a comeback in 2002. Don't look for new stories of these toy-based concepts—at least not from Marvel, although Image is continuing to produce their mega-hit *G.I. Joe* comic. Instead, Marvel has reached an agreement with Hasbro to reprint their 1980s-1990s runs of these titles in trade paperback. Both trade paperback series will debut in April and continue on either a bi-monthly or quarterly basis, depending on demand.

"Given Hasbro's relaunch of ***G.I. Joe*** and ***Transformers*** as toys, and the current fascination with all things from the 1980s, it made sense for Marvel to collect these series," Director - Publishing Operations *Bob Greenberger* said. "After all, writer *Larry Hama* did a lot of development work on this incarnation of the Joes that was used both on the animated series and the toy line. There's some great material there, and it's well worth collecting."

"An entire generation of readers discovered comic books because of these two series, including many of us here at Marvel," Marvel's Marketing Communications Manager *Bill Rosemann* said. "Now, instead of digging through our dog-eared back issues, all of us can relive the battles between the Joes, Cobra, the Autobots and the Decepticons in handy new trade paperbacks!"

Out: ***Elektra #4***, which should be out on November 7th. Yes, that's a little bit later than originally planned... and the reason involves the content of the issue. "After the Trade Center attacks, *Brian Bendis* asked us to delay publication of the next issue by a few weeks because of the nature of the subject matter. Issue #4 will now go on sale November 7th, followed quickly by issue #5 on November 28th and issue #6, our "'Nuff Said' silent issue, on December 12th—after which point, the book will continue on its normal monthly schedule," Marvel's *Bill Rosemann* said, adding that the content was not being changed.

"For those people following the book, you know that we're dealing with a fictional US - Arab conflict," Bendis explained. "Though there's nothing in ***Elektra*** that's deliberately incendiary or parallel to what's going on in the world, we thought a couple weeks' distance was just in good taste."

Cyberosia's Working Overtime

Cyberosia, publisher of the recently-released ***Aporiatica*** collection by *Marcel Guldemond*, has plans to ramp up its production in 2002 with a trio of new offerings slated for release in early 2002, to be followed by additional books throughout the year.

"Kicking things off in January is ***Overtime***, a

futuristic crime story by Marc Bryant and Mal Jones," Cyberosia publisher *Scott O. Brown* said. "Complement it with ***Revolving Hammer***, a powerful anthology from comics' newest and brightest, and ***PopImage, Vol. 1***, a collection of some of the best comics journalism of 2000, and you've got three books that'll get your year off to a great start."

Overtime, set in a afuture in which procreation is a crime, follows Nativity Detective DeSoto as she tracks down the parents of a mysterious newborn. What should be a routine case turns out the be anything but, however—and it could very well be DeSoto's first and last investigation! *Brian Wood* provides the cover for the original graphic novel; look for it in January.

PopImage Volume One, a trade paperback edited by *Christopher Butcher*, compiles revews, columns, and interviews from the PopImage website's first year, spotlighting such creators as *Warren Ellis, Scott McCloud*, and *Joe Quesada*. The 192-page volume is slated for March release.

Cyberosia's third major project for 2002, ***Revolving Hammer***, is an anthology featuring stories "running the gauntlet from horror to slice of life to the outright bizarre," Jones explained. ***Revolving Hammer***, an April release, features work by *Marc Bryant, Mal Jones, Marcel Guldemond, Walter Conely, Becky Cloonan*, and others.

CrossGen Crosses Over

In the year and a half since the company's debut, CrossGen has established itself as a top-tier producer of comics—and thanks to a recently-closed deal with *Michael Uslan*'s Branded Entertainment, the company's concepts could well make the leap to film and television as well.

Uslan, executive producer of Warner Bros' ***Batman*** films, has signed a long-term agreement to develop and produce film and television franchises based on current and upcoming CrossGen concepts. Furthermore, CrossGen will the only comic book company whose properties will be developed by Uslan as he wraps up current contractual obligations.

"CrossGen's comic books and trade paperback graphic novels are unlike any others," Uslan said. "Rather than concentrating on traditional super-heroes, the company's creativity focuses on fantasy, adventure and science fiction in the vein of ***Harry Potter*** and ***Lord of the Rings***, genres geared for immediate success in today's motion picture, television and animation markets. The character development as well as the phenomenal art and coloring raises the quality bar for the entire comic book industry."

"This is a unique agreement because of what it is *not*, rather than what it is," said *Tony Panaccio*, CrossGen's vice president of product development. "It's not an option for our properties. It's not a studio development deal. It's not a traditional character licensing deal where our properties will sit in development hell for years before being made. It's not a deal that conforms to the Hollywood standards, but it doesn't discard them, either. Instead, it's a flexible agreement that will greatly enhance CrossGen's ability to place projects directly into production and leap-frog the waiting game that plagues many comic book-related properties that are optioned by studios, but never produced."

"Michael and I have one very important thing in common," CrossGen publisher & CEO *Mark Alessi* added. "We both love comics. This is a man who has been in and around comics his entire professional career, and who has made specific choices in his life so that he could stay close to comics. With that as a launching pad for our discussions, I found Michael to be one of the most honest, smartest, hardest working and honorable men I have met in business. We *had* to work with him."

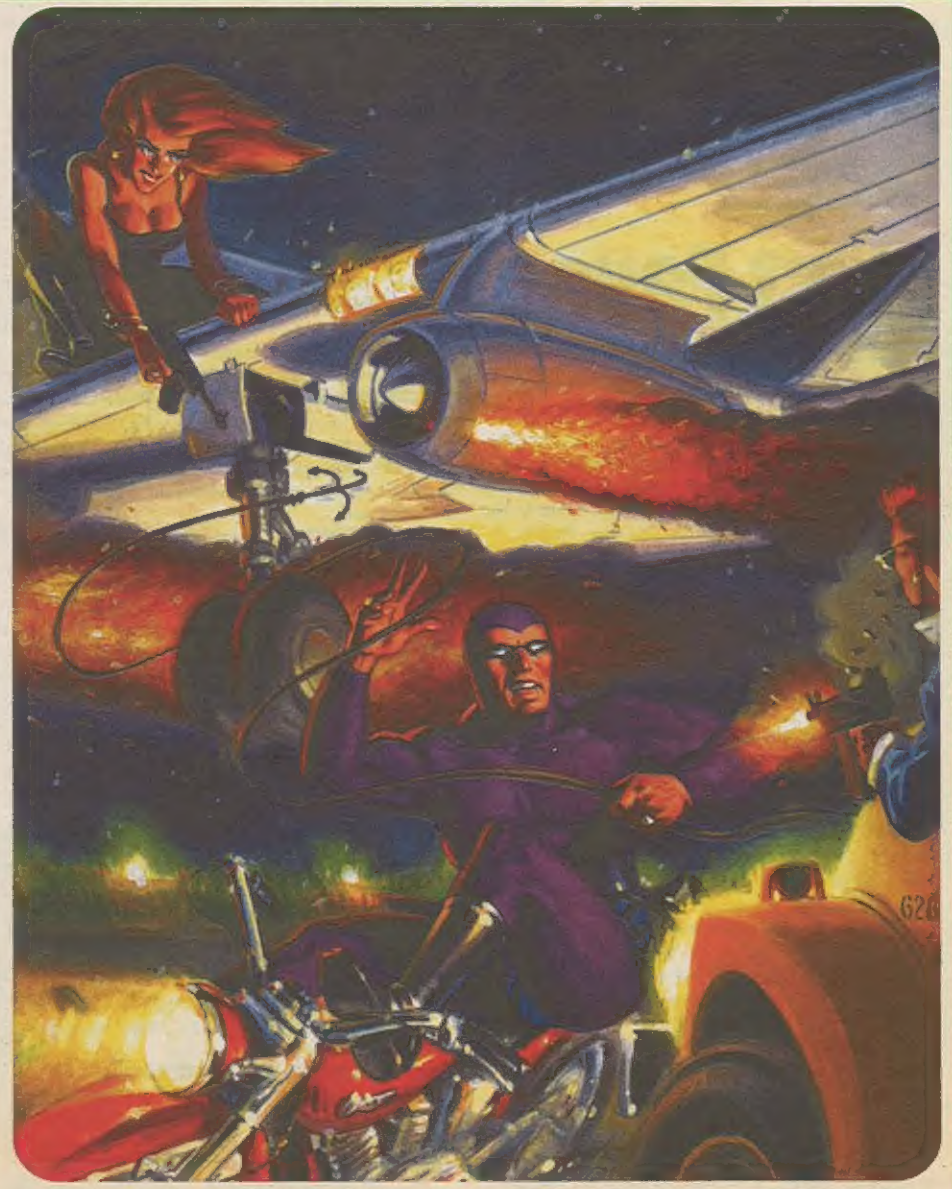
"My company is called Branded Entertainment for a reason," Uslan explained. "We search for brands that can be built into worldwide franchises spawning sequels, television series, cartoons, publishing, music and merchandising. With CrossGen Comics, we immediately have ten different first-class literary properties that fit the 'franchise' bill, which is what most studios and networks are looking for right now."

The Ghost Who Walks Through Comic Shops

For two-thirds of a century, *Lee Falk*'s Ghost Who Walks has been a mainstay of comic strip pages—but it's been many years since the Phantom last starred in his own comic book. Kit Walker returns to the comic shop racks in early 2002, however, in an original self-contained squarebound graphic album from Moonstone Books.

The Phantom: The Ghost Killer, writtenby *Ben Raab* with art by *Fernando Blanco* and *Paul Mounts*, pits the purple-clad hero against a weapons dealer with a multi-million dollar load of high-tech rifles ready for delivery. Bishop is determined not to let one man stand between him and a fortune, though, so he brings in an exotic female assassin to take the Phantom out of the picture... an assassin who has a perfect track record! But she's never faced the Phantom...

The Phantom: The Ghost Killer, the first in a series of contemporary Phantom adventures, is scheduled for January release.



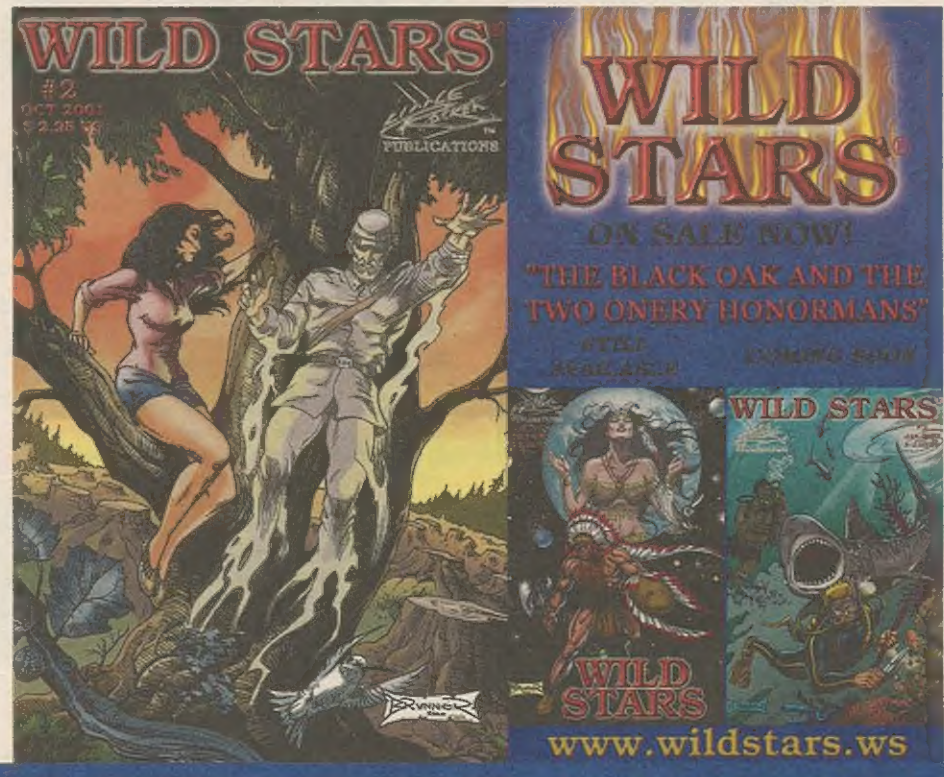
Werewolf? Here Wolf!

Moonstone Books, who kicked off its comics line this fall with a one-shot inspired by White Wolf's Vampire: The Masquerade, turns its attention to another White Wolf property in 2002. ***Werewolf: The Apocalypse—Black Furies***, a 48-page black and white graphic album written by *Joe Gentile* and painted in gray tones by *Eddy Newell*, proves that dark melodrama with a lupine focus doesn't have to be as lethargic as CBS's ***Wolf Lake*** after all!

"In White Wolf's noir/goth universe, the world of Werewolf is dying," writer *Joe Gentile* explained. "Their own numbers are decreasing, while the enemy grows stronger. This book focuses on the Black Fury tribe: warrior-women hell bent on protecting the enviroment and women's rights."

The book follows pack leadaer Libra, who gets involved in the life of a human woman trapped in an abusive relationship. "This is a tale of revenge, tragedy, and hope, breathed into life by the emotion-laden atmospheric painting skill of Eddy Newell," Gentile added.

Werewolf: The Apocalypse—Black Furies, a $5.95 book, is scheduled for January 2002 release.



By popular demand, CSN offers a list of first issues, zero issues, and stand-alone single issues making their appearance in November. The First Faves choices are listed, followed by the remainder of the month's premiere issuese; each listing carries a Diamond Comic Distributors' code number after the publisher's name for each item. This way, if you're interested in an item that your friendly local comic shop doesn't routinely stock, you can tell them exactly how to locate and order it for you!

First Faves

(The best first issues November has to offer!)

○**100 GREATEST MARVELS #1** 11/28 Marvel SEP011482 $3.50

We have no idea what's in these reprint books—but Marvel's fans chose these stories by popular vote!

○**ALAN MOORE'S GLORY #0** Comic Cavalcade SEP011886 $3.50

Available with covers by Park, Haley, Martin, or Mychaels

○**ALAN MOORE'S GLORY #1** Avatar SEP011798 $3.50

Joseph Linsner, David Finch, Melinda Gebbie, Marat Mychaels, Matt Haley, and Matt Martin help launch the long-awaited series by Alan Moore, originally slated for publication from Awesome Comics

○**BATMAN: THE ANKH #1** 11/28 DC SEP010180 $5.95

Chuck Dixon and John Van Fleet present a 2-part tale involving ancient Egypt, immortals, magic, and a crime spree that has existed for centuries

○**BIRD: THE TATTOO GN** 11/14 Dark Horse AUG0100503V $14.95

Written by Carlos Trillo and painted by artist Juan Bobillo, The Tattoo is a tale of greed, beauty, and madness

○**BIRTHDAY RIOTS HC** NBM SEP012115 $14.95

A campaign advisor thinks his life is great, but things begin to go awry as he is torn between his current life and hhis more radical past

○**BLACK TIDE #1** Image SEP011086 $2.95

Justin, Kaila and Theros are the combined key to immense power. When united-they are unbeatable. When they are odds with each other, their power is devastatingly dangerous. Available with covers by Mike Miller, Chris Bachalo, and Andy Park

○**CANNON GOD EXAXXION #1: STAGE 1 (PART 1 OF 8)** 11/21 Dark Horse SEP010016 $2.99

Gunsmith Cats creator Kenichi Sonoda presents a science-fiction adventure series that pits humans... and giant robots... against alien technology and a scheme to take over the Earth

○**CATWOMAN #1** 11/28 DC SEP010184 $2.50

Selina Kyle makes her triumphant return as Catwoman, in a stylish new ongoing series written by Ed Brubaker and Darwyn Cooke

○**CICADA GN** Top Shelf SEP012218 $12.95

Josue Menjivar is back with a moving, emotional graphic novel,

○**DOOM: EMPEROR RETURNS #1** 11/14 Marvel SEP011472 $2.50

At the core of Planet Doom, the metal-faced monarch gains a nearly limitles power source... one that may help him conquer other worlds as well

○**ELEKTRA & WOLVERINE: THE REDEEMER #1** 11/21 Marvel SEP011429 $5.95

In this five-part illustrated novella by Greg Rucka and Yoshitaka Amano, two supremely skilled fighters face off in the streets of New York over the fate of a teenaged girl harboring a secret for which both sides are willing to kill

○**GRIP: THE STRANGE WORLD OF MEN #1** 11/14 Vertigo/DC SEP010265 $2.50

Mike Chang's worst nightmares about gender, identity and conspiracy theories are about to collide - and come true - in this offbeat series by Gilbert Hernandez

○**HARLEQUIN VALENTINE HC** 11/21 Dark Horse/Maverick AUG010018V3 $10.95

Neil Gaiman and John Bolton update the relation of Harlequin and Columbine in this illustrated hardcover

○**INFERNO: HELLBOUND #1** Image SEP011150 $2.50

Hell has broken loose on Earth and all of humanity's fate lies in the hands of an elite squad of soldiers who must enter the gates of hell. Series by Wohl & Silvestri; covers by Silvestri, Keown, D. Turner, Campbell, Jusko, M. Turner, and Benitez

○**JADE: REDEMPTION #1** 11/2 Chaos! SEP011841 $2.99

Haunted by the dark deeds of her past, Jade searches for her identity in San Francisco

○**JINGLE BELLE JUBILEE ONE-SHOT** 11/9 Oni SEP012133 $2.95

It's one thing to have friends over for Christmas Eve. It's a whole different story when your friends happen to be a super-powered cowgirl, a reluctant Halloween witch, and a talking girl snow leopard

○**JLA-HAVEN: ARRIVAL** 11/7 DC SEP010217 $5.95

When a city filled with alien super-beings crash-lands in California, only the World's Greatest Super-Heroes can hope to contain the damage

○**JUST IMAGINE STAN LEE WITH KEVIN MAGUIRE CREATING THE FLASH** 11/14 DC SEP010220 $5.95

A woman's DNA is merged with that of a hummingbird and the world's fastest heroine is born

○**JUSTICE LEAGUE ADVENTURES #1** 11/14 DC SEP010221 $1.99

A new monthly series based on the Cartoon Network's upcoming JLA animated series

○**LEFT BEHIND VOL 1 GN** 11/23 Tyndale House SEP012225 $5.99

Graphic novel series based on the best-selling rapture-themed novels; features work by Aaron Lopresti and others

○**MCCANDLESS & COMPANY: DEAD RAZOR GN** Mandalay SEP012095 $7.95

A dead rock-n-roll star — it could be suicide; it could be murder. It's definitely going to turn into a media circus if Carey McCandless, Jessica Williams, and David Bradshaw don't work fast!

○**NEGATION PREQUEL** 11/7 CrossGen SEP011933 $2.95

Trapped in a nightmarish realm where the sun burns black, 100 strangers plucked from scores of different worlds must find their way home in this new series by Mark Waid, Tony Bedard, Paul Pelletier, Dave Meikis, and James Rochelle

○**NIGHTCRAWLER #1** 11/28 Marvel SEP011445 $2.50

This is the definitive Nightcrawler: who he is... why he is a hero... and what he believes in

○**NO HONOR: MAKYO #1** Image SEP011159 $2.95

Random the thief is still host to Tannen the samurai... so why didn't he go away when his quest for vengeance was completed?

○**PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN 2001 ANNUAL** 11/14 Marvel SEP011454 $2.99

Peter Paarker heads to South America, where he confronts an indigenous tribe that worships... spiders?

○**QUIMBY THE MOUSE HC** Fantagraphics SEP012006 $24.95

○**QUIMBY THE MOUSE SC** Fantagraphics SEP012007 $14.95

A new existential tale by Chris Ware, the creator of Jimmy Corrigan

○**TOP COW CALIFORNIA CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR** Image SEP011149 $2.95

Celebrate Christmas California style with pinups of the most bodacious babes from some of Top Cow's top talents

○**TWO OVER TEN #1** Second to Some SEP012169 $2.95

17-year-old Casey O'Beirne unknowingly stripped away the special powers we each hide, until touching a child accidentally returns some of these "givens" back to their rightful owners. Now, she must collect some of these before humanity unravels

○**WAR STORY: SCREAMING EAGLES** 11/21 Vertigo/DC SEP010273 $4.95

In the waning days of the war in Europe, a battle-weary sergeant and the remnants of his decimated squad find a treasure trove of Nazi plunder and stolen luxuries the likes of which they could only dream of in the previous months of bloody fighting

○**WEREWOLF-THE APOCALYPSE VOL 1 GN: BONE GNAWERS** Moonstone SEP012103 $5.95

Comic inspired by White Wolf's popular RPG

○**WILL EISNER'S THE NAME OF THE GAME HC** 11/21 DC SEP010232 $29.95

Eisner returns with an all-new 176-page hardcover, telling the tumultuous generational saga of a wealthy Jewish family's assimilation into New York society spanning the first half of the 1900's

○**WOLVERINE 2001 ANNUAL** 11/7 Marvel SEP011436 $2.99

The homeless people of New York City have been mysteriously disappearing without a trace for several weeks... so Wolverine takes it upon himself to discover why

○**WONDER WOMAN: SPIRIT OF TRUTH OVERSIZED SC** 11/14 DC SEP010230 $9.95

he fourth book in the best-selling and multiple award-winning series by Paul Dini and Alex Ross finds the Amazon Princess looking into her own soul to find a way to deal with the tasks that await her

○**X-MEN: EVOLUTION #1** 11/28 Marvel SEP011431 $2.25

New animation style series by Devin Grayson and Udon Studios shows what happened BEFORE the animated series began

○**X-MEN: MILLENNIAL VISIONS 2001** 11/28 Marvel SEP011449 $3.50

Pinups by Alex Maleev, Ethan Van Sciver, Lee Ferguson, John McCrea, and many others

Fantastic Firsts

(Other November first issues)

○**AMERICAN BOBSLED CLUB #1** American Bobsled Club SEP011712 $1.95

Bobsledders versus aliens? Only Mariano Nicieza and Tom Grindberg know the whole story!

○**ANOTHER PIECE VOL 3 #1** Abbane SEP011710 $2.95

Toc Fetch presents a comic inspired by classic Hindu literature

○**ARCHEON #1** Xane SEP012269 $2.99

○**ARS NOVA: ART OF KAOS MOON** Tusk SEP012224 $6.95

Focusing on the art of David Boller

○**CATWOMAN SIGNED #1** DF SEP011985 $29.99

○**CAVEWOMAN: MERIEM'S GALLERY #1** Basement SEP011816 $3.50

○**CLASSWAR #1** ComX SEP011911 $2.99

Modern day America: sedated, a land of authoritarian corporations, corrupt politicians and imposing wealth. Two men are going to change that...

○**COOL DEVICES #1** Ironcat SEP012071 $2.95

○**ELEKTRA & WOLVERINE: THE REDEEMER SIGNED #1** DF/Marvel SEP011685 $29.99

○**JADE: REDEMPTION PREMIUM ED #1** 11/2 Chaos! SEP011842 $9.99

○**JADE: REDEMPTION RUBY RED FOIL CVR #1** DF SEP011980 $14.99

○**JADE: REDEMPTION RUBY RED FOIL CVR SIGNED #1** DF SEP011981 $39.99

○**JUST IMAGINE STAN LEE WITH KEVIN MAGUIRE CREATING FLASH SIGNED** DF SEP011994 $39.99

○**JUSTICE LEAGUE ADVENTURES SIGNED #1** DF SEP011991 $29.99

○**NIGHTCRAWLER #1 REMARKED** DF/Marvel SEP011682 $69.99

○**NIGHTHUNTER #1** Empire SEP012000 $3.75

A man in tune with the souls of fallen soldiers absorbs their spirits nightly and, under the cover of night, wages war upon strange and supernatural threat

○**SANTO #1** Airwave SEP011722 $2.95

Masked Mexican wrestling adventure by Chris Yambar and George Broderick

○**SKULL MAN #1** TokyoPop SEP012195 $2.95

○**SORCERER'S CHILDREN VOL 2 #1** SillWill SEP012173 $2.95

○**STAR FEMS #1** AC SEP011716 $5.95

Good girl superhero action by Bill Black, John Beatty, Styeve Vance, Marc Hempel, and others

○**TICK'S BIG RED 'N' GREEN CHRISTMAS SPECTACLE #1** NEC SEP012128 $3.95

○**TUSK WORLD TOUR BOOK 2001** Tusk SEP012223 $4.95

Featuring four short stories by David Boller and Mary Hildebrandt

○**TV WESTERN #1** AC SEP011715 $5.95

Featuring classic WEstern material by Alex Toth, John Buscema, Joe Maneely, and others

○**WONDER WOMAN: SPIRIT OF TRUTH REMARKED** DF SEP011988 $99.99

○**WONDER WOMAN: SPIRIT OF TRUTH SIGNED** DF SEP011987 $39.99

○**X-MEN: EVOLUTION SIGNED #1** DF/Marvel SEP011683 $39.99

Mage Knight Goes Unlimited

CSN told you about upcoming *Mage Knight* changes last month, with the promise of more news as it became available—and now it's available! The big news: both *Mage Knight: Rebellion* and *Mage Knight: Lancers* will cease production, and will be replaced in 2002 with a new set that is currently being called *Unlimited*—though it is likely that the name will be changed before release. The new set will contain a select group of figures from both series with one exception: no uniques from either series will be reprinted in the new core set, nor will they be available in any future expansion. It is expected that the new series will contain its own set of uniques, though no official announcement has been made yet.

Just because you won't be able to buy *Rebellion* or *Lancers* any more doesn't mean that they're suddenly outmoded, though. "We won't be making any new *Rebellion* or *Lancers* as was previously announced." said Executive VP, *Martin Stever*, "Today we are simply clarifying that we won't be selling any *Mage Knight Rebellion* or *Mage Knight Lancers* after December of this year. However, all *Mage Knight* figures are still allowed at all levels of play."

Mage Knight has been the biggest gaming hit of the past two years, quickly becoming one of the top selling games on the market. "The amazing success we have had with these product lines has gone above and beyond our wildest expectations." Says *Jordan Weisman*, founder and CEO. "As is the case with other successful collectible games, we are now looking forward to producing an unlimited version that will carry the line well into the future."

All of the success of the *Mage Knight* line has left WizKids a little overwhelmed, though—and as a result, they have had to reschedule their release plans for the rest of the year. The *Mage Knight Metal Set Eight* will now be released on November 2, with the *Black Powder Rebel Tank* scheduled to ship later that month on November 23. The massive and much-anticipated *Atlantis Guild Tank* won't be hitting stores until December 14, which will be the final release of the year. *The Knights Immortal Charger* originally planned for *November will now be released in February*, and the recently announced *Radiant Light Dragon* won't see the light of day until the spring of 2002.

"This small adjustment to our release schedule will put us right in line with the feedback we have received from retailers and consumers." Stever explained. "Because of some design and production delays, we were going to have too many large items shipping too closely together in November. Retailers and players we talked to told us this was a problem, so we are responding with this schedule change."

Keep looking to *CSN* for the latest news on release dates and future announcements from WizKids.

D&D Looks to Steal Your Adoration

D&D3E fans take note: the latest book to test your skills—and hopefully enhance them—will be out in late November. ***Song and Silence: A Guidebook to Rogues and Bards***,the latest in the series of character class references from Wizards of the Coast for the *Dungeons and Dragons* role-playing game, joins such earlier releases as *Sword and Fist* and *Tomb and Blood*. This ninety-six page volume will include all of the information that you need to enhance your character, including special feats and skills created just for rogues and bards. In addition, new Prestige Classes will be revealed letting you take your character in excitingly different directions.

Song and Silence: A Guidebook to Rogues and Bards is scheduled for release on November 30 for a suggested retail price of $19.95.

mes on Screens, h Big and Small

here has been a trend to turn comic properties into mass media projects for the entertainment of the masses, and it looks as though the gaming industry is about to follow the same trend. The ICV2 web site is reporting that a deal between Palladium Books and *Jerry Bruckheimer* Productions is in the earliest of stages, with the ultimate plan being a feature-length film based on the *Rifts* role-playing game. Bruckheimer is the producer who is responsible for such hit feature films as *The Rock* and *Armageddon*, and his production company has contacted Surge Comic Properties about acquiring the rights to the multi-dimensional role-playing game. Surge Comic Properties is the licensing group that represents Palladium, and helped to secure the recently released *Rifts CCG* product. While there is no guarantee that anything will come from this discussion, it is certainly an interesting prospect for discussion.

For the smaller screen, Fireworks Television has acquired the rights from Wizards of the Coast to produce a live-action television series based upon the *Forgotten Realms* game setting. No production date or distribution details have been announced, but the show is scheduled to be a one-hour adventure series. Both Hasbro Properties and WOTC will work closely with Fireworks to develop the setting and storyline for the series which will include the characters and backgrounds from the *Dungeons and Dragons* setting. Fireworks VP of TV Daniel Tibbets said, "Our production and distribution expertise to develop the TV series coupled with their intense knowledge of the storylines leaves no doubt that *Forgotten Realms* will be a special series." Fireworks Entertainment is the company that produces such shows as *Andromeda*, *Beastmaster*, and the upcoming *Mutant X* series.

Comic Artists Lend Pen to Nobilis Cause

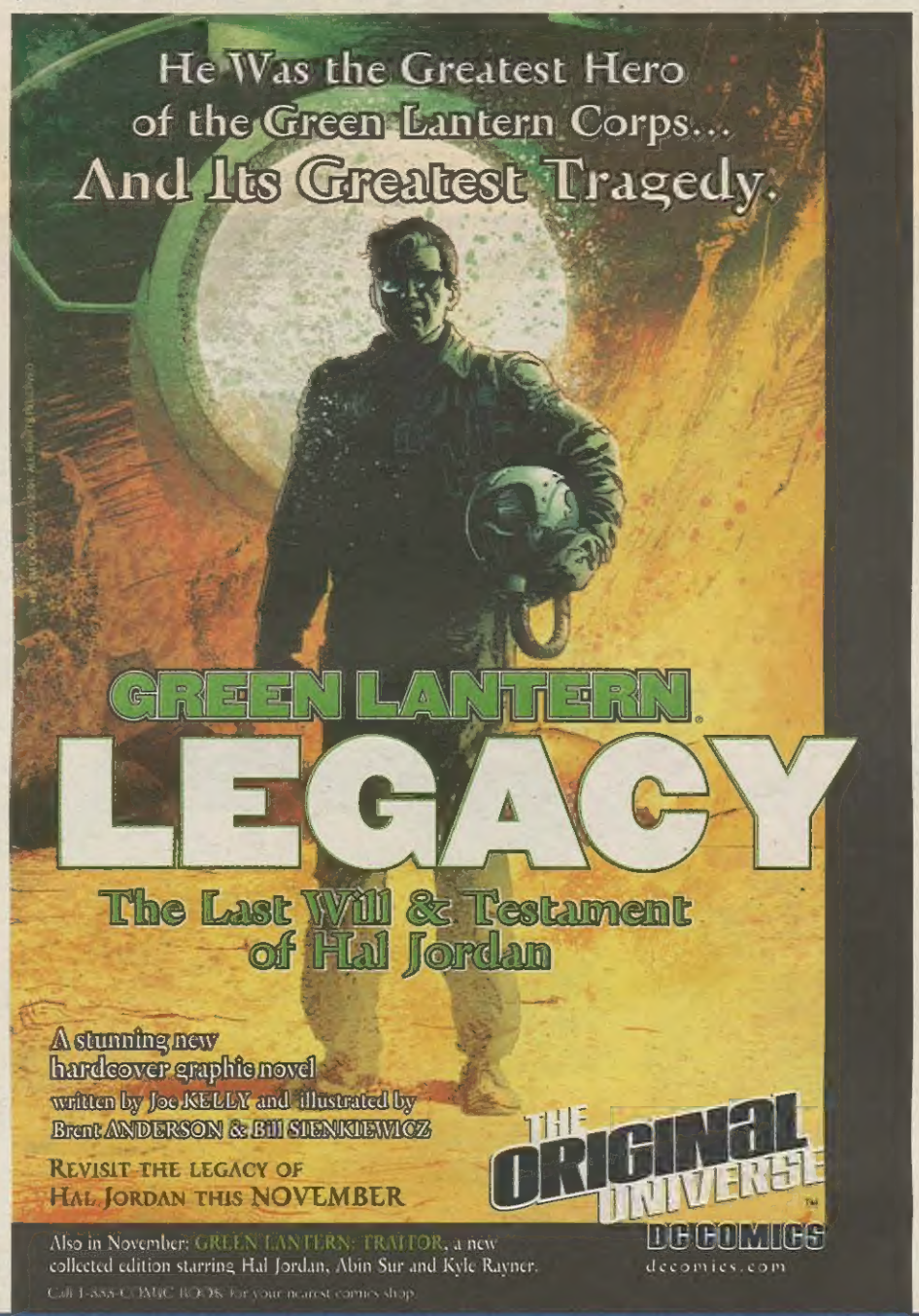
Comic artists *Charles Vess*, *William Michael Kaluta*, and *Bryan Talbot* are among the illustrators who are signed up to produce artwork for the new *Nobilis* hardcover from Hogshead Publishing. The *Nobilis* hardcover is the latest edition of the game which allows players to assume the role of a semi-divine being charged with defending reality from all dangers. The deluxe hardcover will be an oversized 11"x11" volume, with 288-pages of rules and sample adventures for the game. The book will be out at the end of November for the suggested retail price of $42.95.

Decipher Con Cancelled

Due to the tragic events of September 11 and the mood that has swept the country since, Decipher has announced that they will not be holding the DecipherCon event this year. This may disappoint many fans that were anxious to see who would come out victorious and take home the $50,000 first place grand prize. Instead of giving that money out as a prize at a tournament, Decipher has decided to donate those funds to the September 11th Relief Fund, as well as donating other funds set aside for the tournament to charities that will be voted on by the State, Open, and Continental Champions that were qualified to participate in the grand championship. The other big event scheduled for DecipherCon, the world release of *The Lord of the Rings CCG*, will be shifted to a series of smaller regional events that will bring the debut of the game to you.

Diamond Toys with World of Darkness

Diamond Select Toys and Collectibles has acquired the rights to produce a new line of toys based on White Wolf's *World of Darkness* setting. The first line of toys will use characters from the *Vampire: The Masquerade* line and the *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* setting. The first set of figures is tentatively scheduled to include from the Vampire setting: Beckett, Lucita, and Theo Bell. The characters from Werewolf will include: King Albrecht, Mari Cabrah, and the Magrave. The figures will have the same articulation and quality that other Diamond Select Toys have seen, including the *Buffy: The Vampire Slayer* line and the *Gen13* toys. No release date for these toys has been announced, but you can rest assured that *CSN* will keep you updated.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The D20 Phenomenon Continues

Since the release of *Dungeons and Dragons Third Edition* and the development of the open gaming license, a wealth of supplemental material has been available in your favorite gaming store. That doesn't seem like it is about to slack off in the next few months, it seems.

Fast Forward Entertainment has some great concepts coming into print in the coming months, and you will want to keep your eyes open for them. Their first major offering, *The Encyclopedia of Demons and Devils* is a 224-page hardcover sourcebook detailing the underworld creatures that legends claim have tormented mankind over the centuries. *The Encyclopedia of Demons and Devils* will be out in November for the suggested retail price of $29.95. In December, Fast Forward will release the *Rings of Power* sourcebook, providing players with legendary magical rings, their locations, and the creatures that protect them for $26.95; in February, the counterpart volume, *Swords of Power*, will be released, providing the same type of information for $29.95. These volumes are great catalysts for epic style adventuring.

The Penumbra line from Atlas Games, which has already been a big success, will introduce four new products into the gaming market next year. *Backdrops* is a collection of fourteen locations that you can drop into your campaign as an instant location—like an inn, or a stable, or a smithy—each with a secret and full cast of characters, due out in January. *The Ebon Mirror* is an adventure for characters from 8th to 10th level, pitting them against a cult that wishes to see magic maintained by destroying any frivolous magic items; the adventure is scheduled to arrive in stores this January. In February the *Ascension of the Magdalene* combination D20/*Unknown Armies* module will be released, providing a steampunk setting and adventure for your campaign. *The Seven Strongholds* sourcebook is a great reference concept that provides instant castles and keeps for your adventure when the players just have to go off and find something dangerous; *The Seven Strongholds* is scheduled for release in February.

As you can see, there is no shortage of new material headed your way for the D20 system, so just keep an open eye and you will find all the adventure you can handle.

White Wolf Aims to Become D One for d20

When it comes to d20 products, White Wolf is second only to WotC/TSR itself in terms of high-quality offerings—and the company intends to continue that trend in 2002, according to Director of Sales *Fred Yelk*. "White Wolf Publishing is determined to become the #1 independent publisher of d20 products," Yelk said—and judging from the products that the company has in the works, this isn't an idle boast!

The company intends to expand on its *Ravenloft* offerings with a new Ravenloft volume in the first half of 2002. Additionally, White Wolf will offer more *Fiery Dragon* products, along with *Necropolis* (based on a concept originally written by *Gary Gygax*) and a series of *Grimtooth's Traps* volumes.

Necropolis, a 224-page hardcover slated for spring 2002 release, is described by *Clark Peterson* of White Wolf as "a wholesale revision of an amazing product with the blessing and input of *Gary Gygax* himself." *The Wurst of Grimtooth's Traps*, the first *Grimtooth* volume, follows in May; this 224-page hardcover will feature art by *Steve Crompton*, the artist of the original *Grimtooth* series.

White Wolf will expand on these lines throughout 2002—and as more products are announced, you'll hear about 'em in *CSN*!

by BRETT BROOKS

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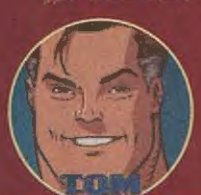

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